#80 Listening to Music Releases Dopamine in the Brain

Listening to music has long been known to trigger the release of dopamine, the neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and reward. According to McGilchrist (2010), dopamine plays a key role in motivating and rewarding us, making tasks feel more enjoyable and helping us stay engaged. For web developers, listening to music while working can have a profound impact on productivity. When music induces dopamine release, it not only elevates mood but also enhances focus, problem-solving abilities, and concentration, which are crucial for tackling complex coding tasks. Certain types of music, especially instrumental or non-distracting genres, create an ideal environment for deep work. Music helps developers enter a "flow" state, where work feels effortless, and time seems to fly. In particular, it aids with repetitive or challenging tasks, such as debugging, by providing emotional boosts that keep motivation high.

#People Overestimate Reactions to Future Events

In web development, impact bias—the tendency to overestimate how strongly and how long future events will affect us—can distort both planning and design decisions. Pilat and Krastev (2025) explain that people often believe a future outcome will bring more lasting joy or disappointment than it really does. Applied to web development, a team might expect that releasing a new feature will permanently boost user engagement, when in reality, users quickly adapt. Similarly, designers may assume that perfecting a visual detail will have a large impact on satisfaction, when usability and functionality often matter more. Overestimating these outcomes can lead to wasted resources and unmet expectations. To counter this, developers should rely on data from past projects, test assumptions with user feedback, and maintain realistic timelines (Pilat & Krastev, 2025). By acknowledging the role of impact bias, teams can plan more effectively and deliver solutions that genuinely align with user needs.

Reference

McGilchrist, S. (2010, December 13). *Listening to music releases dopamine*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-12135590>

Pilat, D., & Krastev, S. (2025). *Impact bias*. The Decision Lab. [https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/impact-bias](https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/impact-bias?utm_source=chatgpt.com)